

Multiple Primary and Histology Coding Rules

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The 2007 Multiple Primary and Histology Coding Rules

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III. Preface

The 2007 Multiple Primary and Histology (MP/H) Coding Rules present the first site-specific multiple primary and histology rules developed to promote consistent and standardized coding by cancer registrars. This project was sponsored by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results (SEER) Program. In January 2003, the Multiple Primary and Histology Task Force was formed to tackle problems identified in existing rules. The MP/H Task Force was a diverse group with membership from all but two SEER regions, the American College of Surgeons (ACoS) Commission on Cancer (CoC), the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR), the National Cancer Registrars Association (NCRA), North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR), 15 central registry representatives, and Canadian Cancer Registries. Physician guidance by specialty pathologists and clinicians was integral to the review and revision process. Regular consultation with the editors of ICD-O-3 clarified ICD-O-3 codes and ensured that the new rules accurately reflect the ICD-O-3 editors' intent and purpose.

The 2007 MP/H Rules include site-specific rules for lung, breast, colon, melanoma of the skin, head and neck, kidney, renal pelvis/ureter/bladder, and malignant brain. A separate set of rules addresses the specific and general rules for malignant solid tumors originating in all other sites. The multiple primary rules guide and standardize the process of determining the number of primaries. The histology rules contain detailed histology coding instructions. For example, there are instructions and guidance for identifying histologic lineages, differentiating between general (NOS) terms and specific histologic types, and correctly assigning mixed and combination codes.

The rules are available in three formats: flowchart, matrix and text. The different formats were developed to meet the needs of registrars who have different learning styles.

The MP/H Task Force also developed three new data items that complement these rules, Multiplicity Counter, Date of Multiple Tumors, and Type of Multiple Tumors Reported as One Primary.

The rules are available in a stand-alone manual and also in the *2007 SEER Coding and Staging Manual*.

A cadre of instructors has been trained to provide in-person education on using the new rules to registrars. Web-based cancer registrar education is available on the SEER training website, <http://seer.cancer.gov/>. Multiple primary and histology issues are covered in several modules, and a 2007 MP/H rules module will be added. Continuing education units can be requested from the National Cancer Registrars Association. Recorded training webcasts will be available for viewing and provide another option for mass training of registrars who cannot attend an in-person workshop.

